

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 a.m. on December 21 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 21 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on Signing the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008

December 26, 2007

Today, I signed into law H.R. 2764, legislation that will fund the Federal Government within the reasonable and responsible spending levels I proposed—without raising taxes and without the most objectionable policy changes considered by the Congress. This law provides a down payment for the resources our troops need, without arbitrary timelines for withdrawal. The Congress should quickly take action next year to provide the remainder of the funding needed by our troops.

I am disappointed in the way the Congress compiled this legislation, including abandoning the goal I set early this year to reduce the number and cost of earmarks by half. Instead, the Congress dropped into the bill nearly 9,800 earmarks that total more than \$10 billion. These projects are not funded through a merit-based process and provide a vehicle for wasteful Government spending.

There is still more to be done to rein in Government spending. In February I will submit my budget proposal for fiscal year 2009, which will once again restrain spending, keep taxes low, and continue us on a path towards a balanced budget. I look forward to working with the Congress in the coming year to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely.

Finally, this legislation contains certain provisions similar to those found in prior appropriations bills passed by the Congress that might be construed to be inconsistent with my Constitutional responsibilities. To avoid such potential infirmities, the executive branch will interpret and construe such pro-

visions in the same manner as I have previously stated in regard to similar provisions.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 26, 2007.

Remarks on the Death of Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan in Crawford, Texas

December 27, 2007

Laura and I extend our deepest condolences to the family of Benazir Bhutto, to her friends, and to her supporters. We send our condolences to the families of the others who were killed in today's violence. And we send our condolences to all the people of Pakistan on this tragic occasion.

The United States strongly condemns this cowardly act by murderous extremists who are trying to undermine Pakistan's democracy. Those who committed this crime must be brought to justice. Mrs. Bhutto served her nation twice as Prime Minister, and she knew that her return to Pakistan earlier this year put her life at risk. Yet she refused to allow assassins to dictate the course of her country.

We stand with the people of Pakistan in their struggle against the forces of terror and extremism. We urge them to honor Benazir Bhutto's memory by continuing with the democratic process for which she so bravely gave her life.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. at the Bush Ranch.

Proclamation—To Adjust the Rules of Origin Under the United States-Chile Free Trade Agreement and the United States-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

December 27, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Section 1206(a) of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (the "1988 Act") (19 U.S.C. 3006(a)) authorizes the